

Greetings. My name is Jess Mauer. I am the executive director of the Maine Association of area agencies on aging. I am also the co-chair of the Maine Council on Aging. On behalf of the Maine Council on Aging and, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the main Wisdom Summit.

Before we get started today, we need to thank a few folks for making the summit possible. First, I'd like to thank our premier sponsor the Maine Community Foundation. They have taken the lead to bring the amazing work of FrameWorks Institute on "reframing aging" to Maine. But, more on that later.

I want to thank our premium sponsors COR Health, Eastern Maine Health Systems, John T. Gorman foundation, MaineHealth, and Senscio Systems Inc.

I also want to thank our gold sponsors AARP Maine and Custom Property Solutions. Please check the program for a complete listing of all of our sponsors and our exhibitors.

Of course the summit would not be possible at all without the hard work of our planning committee names are in your program. I ask you to join me thanking them for their hard work.

<Event details of the day snipped>

So, why are we here and why are we celebrating wisdom? My definition of wisdom is an innate knowing of what needs to be done in every situation. However, it goes a bit further than just knowing - it includes having the skillful means to accomplish what needs to be done.

In this country and in many parts of the world, we are experiencing new challenges related to lower birthrates and ever lengthening life, which in my book is a good thing! However as we live longer and have fewer people in the workforce and in our communities, the systems we've always relied on as we age no longer are working for us.

That makes us all pioneers on a new frontier. While we have some significant challenges in housing, workforce, transportation and healthcare, those challenges have already proved motivation for Mainers to step up and begin redesigning what those systems.

- We are redesigning and re-locating housing, and integrating it with technology and healthcare.
- Mainers are leading an “aging in place” revolution in more than 80 Maine communities.
- Employers are re-thinking business as usual in the way they manage their workforce – creating flexibility and incentives to support older workers working longer.
- Older Mainers are redefining work. After what might be a traditional career, they are starting businesses, becoming mentors, and making our world better in a multitude of ways.
- Our universities are taking the challenge very seriously! The University of Maine has an Aging Initiative the crosses all departments. Saint Joseph's College, is working to integrate issues of aging into campus life and education. The University of New England has been designated one of only five “age friendly universities” in the Country by international organization.

All of this is supported by advocacy at every level from the Maine Council on Aging and its members. We’re celebrating our 5th anniversary this year and are thrilled to be able to say that we’ve been working closely with legislative leaders on both sides of the isle during that time to pass critical legislative initiatives.

As I mentioned earlier – funders in Maine are looking at how they can be meaningful partners in making sure we’re successful!

In short, Maine is on the cutting edge of “reframing aging”. Conditions are just right here and we are cultivating the opportunities that come with longer life and are re-imagining our communities and work experiences. The Maine Wisdom Summit will tell this story. We hope you enjoy the day!